

Potty Training Your Puppy

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Monitoring Your Puppy

Keeping control of your puppy at all times during the potty training process is the most important lesson you must learn. This means whenever the puppy is outside of his/her crate, s/he *must be attached to a six foot leash* with the other end being held, or tied to, your person. ALL THE TIME, even in the house when s/he is eating, drinking, and playing, the pup can never be out of your sight and control.

If your puppy starts to relieve him/herself in the house you are in the position to immediately make the positive correction, quickly snapping the leash and at the same time firmly saying "no!" Then take the dog directly outside to the elimination area.

The correction is most effective if it is given while the dog is in the process of having the "accident." If the leash is not held in your hand, when the dog has an accident you will have to chase after him/her in order to grab hold of the leash. This will teach the dog to run away from you. As a result of anticipating the chase and correction, the dog could become aggressive or shy.

When you cannot be attached to your puppy he/she should be in the crate. Many owners are anxious about leaving a dog in a crate. Teach your dog to be comfortable, in the crate, and that the crate is a "safe" area, using an encouraging, friendly voice and the same phrase each time you put him/her in it, such as "in your box", or "kennel up!". Initially provide a treat such as a small piece of dog biscuit as a reward and inducement and place safe toys in the crate for his enjoyment.

It is important to remember that you NEVER USE THE CRATE AS PUNISHMENT. Always remember to remove the leash and collar before putting your pet in the crate. This will diminish the possibility of injury.

When taking your pup out of the crate, do it in a calm and quiet way without getting him/her excited to prevent him/her from urinating or developing other anxiety problems associated with separation anxiety.

If the pup should relieve him/herself in the crate do not scold him/her. Stay calm, take him/her out of the crate, clean the mess, and use an odor neutralizer. If necessary, clean the dog to remove the urine smell. Properly exercised and nourished, the crate should become a safe place for rest and security.

Designated Elimination Place

Just as important as being in control of the puppy inside it is equally as important to teach him/her when and where to seek relief! When taking the puppy outside to eliminate, always use the same door. This will help him/her to identify going out for the specific purpose of voiding. Dress appropriately so that you can comfortably stay outside with your dog.

You want your dog to learn to eliminate during bad as well as good weather, and not be pressing his/her nose against the door, only to urinate inside when it rains!

Choose an area outside that will always be used for elimination only. Go straight to this area with the puppy on the leash and **STAND IN ONE PLACE**. Don't move! By allowing your puppy to investigate or sniff around a larger area, it will become distracted by the different sights and smells and not fully concentrate on voiding. Initially leave a small amount of stool down for the puppy to identify as its "spot". Keep the remaining area clean. Dogs do not relish stepping in feces any more than you do. This will also help in controlling the spread of intestinal parasites.

Once you have brought the puppy out to the designated elimination area, start repeating in a quiet, monotone voice, a phrase such as "do your business". Use the same phrase every time you take your puppy out to this place. You want the pup to associate your particular phrase with the actual process of elimination. Later on, this will be helpful in getting him/her to eliminate quickly on command whenever it hears the phrase. Continue repeating the phrase until he starts to void and then be silent while h/she is urination or defecating. Wait until he/she is completely finished and then vocally **PRAISE** < praise, praise! Dogs respond very quickly to your tone of voice, so if you start to praise him/her during the act he/she may get distracted and stop to wag the tail.

Allow a **TEN MINUTE** period for the puppy to relieve himself. Training your dog to **GO QUICKLY** when first taken outside will help to form a pattern that will ultimately conserve time. If you take your puppy for long walks or play a long time before it voids you are forming a habit that may not always be possible to repeat, because of weather conditions, illness, or time restrictions.

For the first two weeks that you begin the program, you should give the puppy two extra minutes after he/she has relieved him/herself to make sure that they are completely finished with the process. Many owners rush inside too quickly, only to have the puppy finish inside what they started to do outside.

Once the pup has relieved itself in the designated area, then it's time to **EXERCISE** and **PLAY**.

If the puppy has not relieved him/herself within the ten minute time frame, bring him/her directly back into the house. Don't stay out any longer. Keep him/her inside until the next scheduled elimination walk. Watch for any sign that he/she may need to relieve him/herself again such as circling, smelling the floor, staring at you or pulling towards the door. If so indicated, go again back outside to the elimination area and repeat the entire process.

Do not take your puppy out more frequently than the schedule indicates for an elimination walk if he/she is not signaling a need to do so, for then he/she may never learn control for any period of time.

As your puppy progresses through the training you will become aware of its individual needs and habits and be able to respond appropriately. Adhere to the housebreaking principles until your puppy has had absolutely no accident for a period of at least twelve consecutive weeks. Only then would we consider the dog to be housebroken.

Schedule

The schedule set out next should provide the BASIS for a schedule for you, and its not written in stone. Each person should modify the schedule to meet their needs, and their lifestyle. Consistency and continuity are important elements of the schedule. Give your initial plan at least five full days to be effective before making any changes.

Those of you who are not available to walk your dog as often as indicated in the schedule do not fret! Go to work and don't rush home from errands. Dogs will eventually develop enough physical control to become housebroken. If you are gone for more than eight hours consider hiring a responsible dog walker for at least one midday elimination walk and some playtime, or arrange fore "day care" at a boarding kennel or your veterinarians office while you are gone.

Scheduling intake of food and water makes it easier for the dog to control itself. It is more humane than allowing the dog unlimited access to food and water with no chance to urinate or defecate outside. This approach is safe and effective for normal puppies. If you have any doubts or concerns about managing food and water intake, please consult your veterinarian.

Keep the food down on the floor in front of the dog for a period of fifteen minutes while will allow the dog plenty of time to eat. If the dog does not finish take up the food until the next scheduled feeding.

Immediately after eating and drinking, dogs should be taken out to eliminate regardless of when they last urinated or defecated. The reason for this is that dogs, like people after eating or drinking can experience a gastrointestinal reflex with a resultant need to void.

In addition to the following schedule, there are other times to consider taking your puppy outside to void:

For puppies under 4 months of age:

1. Usually after a nap
2. After a snack
3. Before indoor playtime (activity may stimulate the need to void)

For dogs of any age:

Any time indicated by the dog's behavior or signals such a circling, sniffing the floor, pulling towards the door.

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
7 am	Elimination walk and play, exercise
8 am	Food, water elimination walk play, exercise
11 am	water, elimination walk, play, exercise
2 pm	Water, elimination walk, play, exercise
5 pm	Food, water, elimination walk, play, exercise
8 pm	Water, elimination walk, play, exercise
11 pm	Elimination walk

Remember, if you are not finding your puppy able to control its bladder for these short periods of time it is time to seek help from your veterinarian. There may be other reasons your puppy is unable to “hold” themselves, such as bladder infections. If you have concerns, make sure to seek advise!

Good luck, and enjoy your puppy!